

COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
311 Grand Avenue, Suite #105  
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038



COUNCILMEMBER  
Sam Crawford

BP Cherry Point Cogen  
DEIS Comment - 3

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

FROM THE DESK OF COUNCILMEMBER SAM CRAWFORD

October 1, 2003

Irina Makarow  
Siting Manager  
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council  
925 Plum Street SE, Building 4  
PO Box 43172  
Olympia, WA 98504-3172

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ENERGY FACILITY SITE  
EVALUATION COUNCIL

Dear Council Members, and Ms. Makarow:

I am writing this letter regarding the application you are considering for the BP Cherry Point Cogeneration Project. I will read this letter into the record at the Open House to be held in Blaine on October 1.

I should note that as a member of the Whatcom County Council, I speak from my own perspective. The County Council has not formally taken a position on this application. However, I can assure you I have spoken to many of my constituents throughout Whatcom County whom I represent, and I am honored to informally speak for them.

As I review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this project (dated September 5, 2003), I see the applicant is required to compare the "Impacts of the Proposal" to the "Impacts of No Action". In most cases, the "No Action" impacts are generally described correspondingly as "No Impact".

In light of the proponent's prepared materials describing the positive aspects of this project, one could view "No Action" (that is, no construction of this facility) as detrimental in a number of ways:

- No new steam source would be provided to the existing facility, thus necessitating the continued use of older, less efficient, and more polluting boilers
- Greenhouse Gas offsets would not occur in other facilities
- 30 years of proposed Greenhouse Gas mitigation would not occur
- Recycling of Alcoa Intalco Works cooling water would not occur
- Post-use treatment of this recycled water with updated treatment before discharge into Puget Sound would not occur
- Wetland enhancements to the CMA 1 and CMA 2 sites, creating hydraulic residence time that enhances existing wetlands and restores drained wetlands, would not occur
- A wetland enhancement ratio of nearly 3.5 to 1, affecting the enhancement of 110 acres of wetlands, would not occur

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- Wildlife habitat quality improvements associated with wetland enhancement, along with planting, cultivating and monitoring of native trees, plants, and grasses, would not occur 8
- An aggressive noxious weed control program overseen by the Noxious Weed Control Board would not occur 9
- 635 MegaWatts of needed additional electrical power would not be supplied to the Northwest power grid 10
- Further industrial development of land zoned and set aside specifically for this type of use under Whatcom County Zoning rules, and the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan, would not occur at this time 11
- The opportunity for 30 additional living-wage jobs in Whatcom County would be lost 12
- The revenue generation of approximately 6 million dollars in annual property taxes to be paid by this facility would not occur. There is no doubt that the County portion of this revenue is badly needed during this time of budget shortfalls 13

When one considers these attributes of the proposed project, it is an oversimplification to say the "No Action" alternative has "no impact" on Whatcom County. Much of my time on the County Council is spent working on, discussing, and implementing planning for the future. This planning practice involves a myriad of potential impacts and results, in an attempt to envision a future that is vibrant, attractive, and provides the highest qualities of life for succeeding generations of Whatcom County citizens. This proposal does have the potential to fit in well to that vision in many perspectives. "No Action", in and of itself, would speak volumes about the future of our county.

Based on my reading of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I see this project as an important component of our designated and zoned "Heavy Impact Industrial" portion of Whatcom County. I urge you to work cooperatively with the applicant, to carefully consider the concerns of the community along with any negative impacts that may be associated with the project, and permit the construction of this facility in a manner that benefits the people of Whatcom County as well as the applicant.

I appreciate your time, and the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

  
Sam Crawford  
Whatcom County Councilmember

C: Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council  
Correspondence File

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